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***Construction Industry News from City Hall***

*Superintendent of Central Inspection  
Kurt Schroeder*

## **Mechanical Code Amendments Adopted**

Due to a number of discrepancies between the 2000 International Residential Code (as adopted in February 2002 with local amendments) and the 2000 International Mechanical Code (as adopted in September 2002 with local amendments), area builders and the Wichita Area Builders Association (WABA) requested in March 2003 that the Office of Central Inspection impose a moratorium on enforcement of certain 2000 IMC provisions, primarily related to exhaust and ventilation requirements for one and two family residential construction.

A 2000 IMC construction enforcement "moratorium" was subsequently implemented for 1&2 family residential construction. For nearly eight months, the City's Mechanical Board, in conjunction with an ad hoc committee of local builders, mechanic tradesmen and WABA, performed an in-depth review of both the IMC and the IRC, as locally amended, specifically as related to exhaust, ventilation, duct insulation & sealing, and related requirements for one and two-family new construction.

In the late fall of 2003, the Mechanical Board voted to adopt a number of proposed amendments to the IMC and to the new mechanical code provisions to be included in the IRC.

In February 2004, the City Council voted to adopt the recommended mechanical code amendments in both the 2000 IRC and the 2000 IMC. The ordinances were published on Friday February 16, 2004, and are being applied to building and mechanical permits issued on or after March 1, 2004.

*Copies of the delineated ordinance amendment packets that were submitted to the City Council and adopted are available from the Office of Central Inspection, 268-4413.*

***Kurt Schroeder, Superintendent of Central Inspection***

## Removal of Building Permit Fee Discount

Effective Monday April 12, 2004, the 10% discount on OCI building permit fees will be eliminated. The 10% discount (which is 10% below the 1985 permit fee tables adopted in the City's Building Code) has been in place since December 2002, and has reduced OCI's operating budget reserve level to the low end of target levels (just above 25% of the OCI's total annual 2004 budget).

*Kurt A. Schroeder, Superintendent of Central Inspection*

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## ADA Seminar April 23, 2004

The Office of Central Inspection and the Wichita Area Builder's Association are co-sponsoring an all-day (8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.) American's with Disabilities Act seminar on Friday April 23, 2004. The seminar will focus on ADAAG construction requirements and proposed amendments, and will be presented by Kent Johnson, principal operations manager for the Disability Management Consulting Group located in Columbia, MO. Mr. Johnson also subcontracts with the Great Plains ADA & IT Center to provide disability rights technical information. Architects may earn up to seven learning credit hours for self-reporting.

Applications may be obtained from WABA, 730 N. Main, Wichita, KS 67203, phone: 265-4226, fax: 265-5964 or from the City of Wichita web page <http://wichita.gov/CityOffices/OCI> or from OCI at 455 N. Main (City Hall), 7<sup>th</sup> floor, phone: 268-4477 (Paul Hays), fax: 268-4663 (attn: Paul Hays)

*Kurt A. Schroeder, Superintendent of Central Inspection*

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## Commercial Outdoor Lighting Zoning Issues

If lighting is being considered for projects close to residential locations, consideration should be given to the impact on and responses from those homeowners.

The Unified Zoning Code addresses and requires Lighting controls for commercial uses adjacent to residential zoning districts. Art. IV, Sect. IV-B (4) states, Outdoor lighting sources shall employ cut-off luminaires and shall be mounted at a height not exceeding one-half the distance from the neighboring lot, unless evidence is provide to the satisfaction of the Zoning Administrator that the light source will be aimed or shielded from the neighboring lot such that light trespass and glare are minimized.

High intensity lighting is necessary in many cases but careful use of planning locations, lighting design, pole height and angle of mounting will minimize neighborhood complaints and business alienation.

*Randy Sparkman, Zoning, License & Sign Supervisor*

# Required Ceiling Heights And Stairway Headroom For Residential

I have received several questions about the minimum required ceiling heights and stairway headroom for residential construction. To understand the minimum ceiling height requirements you must first be familiar with the codes requirements for minimum room size as found in section R304 of the IRC. Most of the homes we build today exceed these minimum room sizes, however they may become handy to be familiar with designing minimum ceiling height.

## SECTION R304, MINIMUM ROOM AREAS

**R304.1 Minimum area.** Every dwelling unit shall have at least one habitable room that shall have not less than 120 square feet (11.2 m<sup>2</sup>) of gross floor area.

**R304.2 Other rooms.** Other habitable rooms shall have a floor area of not less than 70 square feet (6.5 m<sup>2</sup>).

**Exception:** Every kitchen shall have not less than 50 square feet (4.64 m<sup>2</sup>) of gross floor area.

**R304.3 Minimum dimensions.** Habitable rooms shall not be less than 7 feet (2134 mm) in any horizontal dimension.

**Exception:** Kitchens.

**R304.4 Height effect on room area.** Portions of a room with a sloping ceiling measuring less than 5 feet (1524mm) or a furred ceiling measuring less than 7 feet (2134 mm) from the finished floor to the finished ceiling shall not be considered as contributing to the minimum required habitable area for that room.

## SECTION R305, CEILING HEIGHT

**R305.1 Minimum height.** Habitable rooms, hallways, corridors, bathrooms, toilet rooms, laundry rooms and basements shall have a ceiling height of not less than 7 feet (2134 mm). The required height shall be measured from the finish floor to the lowest projection from the ceiling.

### Exceptions:

1. Beams and girders spaced not less than 4 feet (1219 mm) on center may project not more than 6 inches (152 mm) below the required ceiling height.
2. Ceilings in basements without habitable spaces may project to within 6 feet, 8 inches (2032mm) of the finish floor; and beams, girders, ducts or other obstructions may project to within 6 feet, 4 inches (1931 mm) of the finished floor.
3. Not more than 50 percent of the required floor area of a room or space is permitted to have a sloped ceiling less than 7 feet (2134 mm) in height with no portion of the required floor area less than 5 feet (1524mm) in height.

## SECTION R314, MINIMUM HEADROOM for RESIDENTIAL AREAS

The adoption of the 2000 IRC on February 5, 2002 brought a change in the minimum headroom requirement for residential stairways.

**R314.3 Headroom.** The minimum headroom in all parts of the stairway shall not be less than 6 feet, 8 inches (2032 mm) measured vertically from the sloped plane adjoining the tread nosing or from the floor surface of the landing or platform.

We are aware that the "1 & 2 Family Dwellings" manual published by our office is not current with this requirement. We are in the process of updating this manual to bring it current with the residential codes that are enforced.

*Ray Sledge, Building Construction Inspection Supervisor*

# OCI/Public Works Policy

## Developed for Residential 1 & 2 Family

### Exterior Storm Drain Piping/Lines

Recently, OCI and Public Works have met with representatives of the construction industry to assist in development of a specific policy regarding storm water and sump pump drainage for residential one and two-family construction and use. This policy development was in response to continuing industry questions about such installations, and to the article that appeared in the prior CINCH, mailed in December 2003.

#### Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy is to outline minimum installation guidelines and related Office of Central Inspection and/or Public Works/Engineering permitting requirements for both aboveground and underground storm water or sump pump piping/discharge for 1 & 2 family residential structures.

This Policy is developed with respect to the requirements set forth in City Code Title 10 (Streets and Sidewalks), Title 16 (Sewers, Sewage Disposal and Drains), and Title 18 (Building Code).

#### Policy Statement

##### **Permits – When Not Required.**

City of Wichita permits are **NOT** required for the following outdoor storm water or *uncontaminated* sump pump piping/discharges for 1 & 2 family residential construction or use:

- ⌚ Any drain pipe/discharge that is not placed or located within 7.5 feet of a public sidewalk.
- ⌚ If no public sidewalk exists, any drain pipe/discharge that does not abut or lie within a public street right-of-way, and which is not closer than 10' to the back of any public street curb.
- ⌚ Any drain pipe/discharge that is not placed or located within 5 feet of a rear private property line.
- ⌚ Any drain pipe/discharge that is not placed or located within 2 feet of a side private property line and does not project discharged water across a property line.
- ⌚ Any drain pipe/discharge that is not connected to a public storm sewer line, inlet or box.
- ⌚ Any drain pipe/discharge that is not placed or located in a *publicly maintained* drainage way, ditch or culvert. **NOTE:** The installation of private storm drainage lines within a public easement (except to use the utility) is discouraged so as not to encumber the easement. Installation of such private drain lines, sprinkler heads, fences, flower beds, rock gardens, etc. within a public easement are subject to removal at the property owner's expense in the event a public utility repair or replacement is necessary.

##### **Permits – When Required.**

City of Wichita permits shall be required for the following:

- ⌚ If storm water drainpipe/discharge extends through a public street curb (sump pump pipe/discharge is not permitted), but not directly into a City storm sewer line, drain, inlet or box, a "Curb Cut Permit" must be obtained from the Public Works Engineering Office. A City of Wichita licensed cement contractor must obtain such curb cut permit that has a current fee of \$70. The contractor must submit a drawing or site plan with the request for the permit.
- ⌚ If storm water drainpipe/discharge extends to and connects to a City storm line, drain, inlet or box, an OCI Storm Sewer Permit, *issued to a licensed drain layer or plumber*, must be obtained from OCI. In this

*cont. on page 5*

# OCI/Public Works Policy for Exterior Storm Drain Piping/Lines

cont. from page 4

circumstance, OCI will obtain any required drawings for the permit review/issuance, and will route the permit application for appropriate reviews and approvals to Public Works Engineering and Storm Water Management staff, and will also request/obtain Compliance Certificate (as is presently done).

Because an OCI Storm Sewer Permit must be obtained in this circumstance, OCI plumbing/sewer inspection staff will inspect the piping and connection/s for installation and code compliance.

If this connection to the storm water inlet is in public right-of-way, the contractor will be required to obtain a "Dirt or Pavement Cut" permit from Public Works Engineering. The current fee for a dirt cut permit is \$35. If sidewalk or pavement is required to be removed during installation of pipe, a pavement cut permit with a current fee of \$70 is required to be obtained, and the City's contractor will make the permanent repair with the costs being billed to the plumbing/sewer contractor.

**NOTE:** *This Policy affects 1 & two-family construction only. The procedures for commercial exterior storm drain piping/lines (any construction other than 1&2 family) are not affected by this Policy.*

*General questions about policies/procedures for either 1&2 family construction or commercial construction may be directed to the Office of Central Inspection Sewer Desk, 268-4341.*

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## ***ATTENTION Plumbers, Sewer Contractors & Drain Layers***

Excavation work in City street right-of-way is regulated by City Code Section 10.20 dating back to adoption in 1966. Code Section 10.20 requires all persons, public utility corporations, plumbers, sewer contractors, drain layers, and all other persons authorized to do so, to obtain a permit before cutting any sidewalk or pavement, or making any excavation in any street, street right-of-way, alley, or other public ground for the purpose of laying, repairing, removing or replacing any pipes, underground wires or other conduits, or for any other purpose not specifically mentioned.

Please be advised that before doing any excavation work in a public street, street right-of way, or alley right-of-way you must not only obtain the required permit(s) from the Office of Central Inspection, **but also must obtain either a pavement cut or excavation permit from the City Engineer's office.** Please be prepared to provide us with your sewer or plumbing permit number(s) so that we can avoid any double billing errors.

A penalty up to **double the cost** of the permit will be charged for failure to call for inspections or obtain a permit for work performed on city right-of-way. If you have any questions, please contact the City Engineer's Office, 455 N. Main, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor, Wichita, KS 67202 at 268-4480.

***Jim Armour, Acting City Engineer***

# Office of Central Inspection Position Vacancy

The Office of Central Inspection is seeking qualified applicants to serve as a Construction/Combination Building Construction Inspector. Candidates should have broad construction experience. National building inspection certification from ICBO or ICC is preferred, but not initially required.

Beginning pay ranges are approximately \$28,000 - \$32,000 annually, depending on experience and certifications. The selected candidate may progress through a series of pay grades with additional experience and certifications, to a current top-end pay of approximately \$49,000 annually.

Applications may be obtained from the City of Wichita Personnel Office on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor of City Hall, 455 N. Main St., Wichita, Kansas, or by calling (316) 268-4531.



CITY OF  
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[www.wichita.gov](http://www.wichita.gov)



**THE CITY OF WICHITA**  
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